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State Dept. review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
27 March 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

PAKISTAN

(Situation as of 1200 EST)

1. The military situation in East Pakistan remains confused with the Indian press reporting continuing battles in various parts of the provinces between the army on one side and civilian, police and members of the paramilitary East Pak Rifles on the other. The Indian reports appear at least exaggerated and are in direct conflict with statements made in private by high ranking Pakistani military officers to US officials in which they claim that the armed forces are rapidly reestablishing control over East Pakistan. Press reports are also in conflict over the condition of the Martial Law Administrator for East Pakistan, Lt. General Tikka Khan, with one press service reporting him killed while another described him as seriously injured. Both reports, however, appear based on broadcasts by the clandestine "Voice of Independent Bengal."

2. Dacca, according to the US Consul General, experienced an "uneasy calm" today with the curfew lifted from 0700 to 1600. He describes the military crackdown on the city as carried out "swiftly, efficiently, and often with ruthless brutality." The Consul General has received no reports of injuries to Americans but has not yet established contact with those living in remote areas of the province. He recommends against evacuation of Americans at this time as the army is fully in command of Dacca where the bulk of US nationals reside. He does not believe the Bengalis will take

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out their resentment over events on the Americans and estimates it will be weeks, perhaps months, before effective insurrectional activity can be mounted.

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3. Mujibur Rahman appears to be in custody despite repeated denials by the clandestine radio in East Pakistan that he has been arrested. The leader of the Awami League is reported to have been taken shortly after the army action began in Dacca on the night of 25-26 March.

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4. West Pakistan reportedly is quiet today with the press, under complete censorship, devoting most of its coverage to President Yahya's speech of yesterday. Z. A. Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, held a news conference in Karachi on 27 March in which he blamed Mujib for the crisis and came out in full support for the actions taken by Yahya and his martial law administration.

5. In India, attention continues to focus on events in East Pakistan with widespread sympathy being expressed by government leaders and the press for the Bengalis. Mrs. Gandhi, in response to demands from parliamentary deputies for a strong statement in support of Bangla Desh, noted that her government shared the "deep agony" of parliament at events in East Pakistan. In Calcutta, meanwhile, the Chief of Staff of the Eastern Command told a US official that the Indian Army was making contingency plans for possible intervention in East Pakistan. He noted that the army considered intervention "military unfeasible" but feared it could become "politically necessary." The Indian officer expressed his personal view that the army would find it easy to supply the East Bengalis with arms, ammunition and other logistic necessities.

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6. International press treatment of recent events in East Pakistan may be somewhat colored in the next few days by the forcible removal, at gunpoint, of correspondents from Dacca on 26 March. The correspondents were placed on a Pakistan International Airways plane and flown to Karachi. Included in the group were representatives from Time-Life, CBS, The Washington Post, New York Times, The Washington Star, Newsweek, UPI, ABC, and The Baltimore Sun.